



Pathways to Success

Helpful Strategies for Parents and Caregivers of Young Children

Easy (and Fun!) Fine Motor Activities to Try at Home

You don't need to spend a lot of time (or money) to work on developing fine motor skills at home. The following activities can be set up using simple materials you may already have, or can easily pick up at a "dollar"-type store:

- **Play dough:** Develop hand strength by kneading, rolling, squishing and poking play dough. Add rolling pins and cookie cutters, or hide small toys, beads, dinosaurs, etc. in the play dough. Drive toy cars or walk small toy animals through the playdough to make tracks.
- **Tongs:** Work on scissor skills and develop hand strength by practicing the "opening and closing" action with small "ice cube" tongs or tweezers. Add pom poms, blocks and small toys to practice picking things up; use different containers to practice sorting by colour, size, number, etc.
- **Clothespins:** Develop hand strength by practicing opening and closing clothespins. Add cards with numbers, letters and/or stickers to provide "targets" to pin to; create a "scavenger hunt" where the child must pin items throughout the house.
- **Stamps:** Develop grasping skills and hand strength by pressing down on the stamp pad and on the paper. Use letter and number stamps to work on letter recognition; practice making words, counting, etc.
- **Stickers:** Develop grasping skills by peeling stickers and placing them anywhere and everywhere! Use themed stickers, letter and number stickers to work on school concepts and letter recognition; practice making words, counting, etc.
- **Wind up toys:** Develop grasping skills, hand strength, and fine motor skills by winding up toys and letting them go (remember the days before batteries?).
- **Toothpicks:** Develop grasping skills, hand strength and fine motor skills by building with toothpicks. Use playdough as a base; roll small playdough balls to hold toothpicks together.